

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 AF-05 IO-09 ADP-00 IGA-02 EB-05 L-03 /084 W

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R 111035Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1332

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

INFO AMEMBASSY FORT LAMY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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USUN FOR KOEHRING

AIDAC

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: LAKE CHAD BASIN COMMISSION (LCBC)

REFS:)A STATE 1390 B) GRADER/TONWE LTR DEC. 13, 72

C) STATE 208121 D) YAOUNDE 3702 E) YAOUNDE 2354

1. RDO HAD LENGTHY GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH BENSON TONWE, EXECUTIVE SEC., LCBC WHO ANNOUNCED THAT COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE HELD IN YAOUNDE DEPT. 20-29TH WITHOUT HEADS OF STATE MEETING. TONWE SAID LCBC MEETING SCHEDULED JULY 20-31 WAS POSTPONED BY PRESIDENT AHIDJO ALLEDGEDLY BECAUSE PRESENT GOWON DID NOT WANT TO COME TO CAMEROON THEN. THIS WAS SUPPOSEDLY RELATED BY CAMEROONIAN AMBASSADOR IN LAGOS TO AHIDJO BUT TONWE TALKED TO GOWON WHO HAD AGREED TO COME AND WAS, CONTRARY TO AHIDJO'S INFORMATION, WILLING TO MEET AS SCHEDULED. TONWE SPECULATES SOMETHING ELSE WAS BEHIND CANCELLATION OF THE SUMMIT MEETING AT THAT TIME. IN ANY CASE AHIDJO ADVISED TONWE IN GAROUA OF DECISION TO POSTPONE LCBC MEETING THROUGH ONE OF CAMEROON'S MOST IMPORTANT FIGURES, OUSMANE MEY, GOVERNOR OF NORTHERN CAMEROON. TONWE THEN SET AUGUST 30 FOR LCBC SUMMIT MEETING BUT CHAD PRESIDENT

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TOMBALBAYE VETOED THAT PROPOSAL BY SCHEDULING A PARTY CONGRESS

ON THAT DATE. TONWE SAID TOMBALBAYE WAS PIQUED BECAUSE AHIDJO FAILED TO DISPATCH GOVERNOR MEY PERSONALLY TO FT. LAMY TO ADVISE HIM OF LCBC CANCELLATION AND HE DEMANDED A LETTER FROM AHIDJO TO ADVISE HIM OFFICIALLY OF LCBC MEETING POSTPONEMENT, WHICH AHIDJO SENT. TONWE SAID CHAD HAS BEEN PREVENTING CHADIANS FROM CROSSING INTO CAMEROON BY LEVYING HEAVY TAXES AT CHARI RIVER CROSSING POINT WHICH HAS HURT BUSINESS IN FORT FOUREAU ACROSS THE RIVER. WITH TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES TONWE THOUGHT IT BEST TO SET LCBC SUMMIT MEETING FAR IN FUTURE, PERHAPS DECEMBER, AND ONLY CALL COMMISSION MEETING IN SEPTEMBER. TONWE SAYS HE TRIES TO STEER LCBC OUT OF POLITICS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE AND STICK TO DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS.

2. WITH RESPECT TO PROPOSAL IN REFTEL A) TO HAVE AFDB TAKE ON MANAGEMENT FT. FOUREAU-FOTOKOL DESIGN STUDY TONWE SAID IT WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER SUCH ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED. HE SAID LCBC NEEDS SUCH EXPERIENCE ITSELF AND WOULD NEVER DEVELOP AS AN ORGANIZATION IF IT FARMS OUT WORK TO AFDB. BUT, HE WOULD KEEP IDEA IN MIND.

3. AS FOR POSSIBLE GRANT STUDY YAGOUA-BONGOR SECTION OUTSIDE OF GRANT PACKAGE PROPOSED REFTEL E), TONWE SAID HE UNDERSTANDS WHY AID PROPOSES THIS BUT CHAD WOULD BE UTTERLY OPPOSED TO ANOTHER STUDY SAYING ROAD HAS ALREADY BEEN STUDIED BY US CONSULTANT AND IT IS TIME TO MOVE AHEAD. TONWE SAID AID IS FREE TO MAKE THIS PROPOSAL IN SEPTEMBER MEETING BUT HE ADVISES AGAINST IT BECAUSE OF EXPECTED CHADIAN NEGATIVE REACTION WHO WOULD ACCUSE AID OF DECEPTION AGAIN. FOREGOING LED TO ISSUE OF TWO-STEP STUDY UNDER THE LOAN PER REFTEL B) AND REFTELS C) AND D). RDO POINTED OUT WHAT WE WERE REALLY PROPOSING IS GRANT FINANCE FOR FIRST STEP IN TWO STEP LOAN PROCEDURE. TONWE REACTED STRONGLY INSISTING LCBC HAD NEVER AGREED TO TWO-STEP PROCEDURE FOR LOAN.

4. THIS COULD BE TROUBLESOME POINT IN LOAN NEGOTIATIONS IN SEPTEMBER. REQUEST REDSO REVIEW THIS WHOLE QUESTION BECAUSE IT WILL HAVE TO BE CONFRONTED SOMEDAY, EITHER IN FULL LCBC MEETING OR WITH TECHNICIANS WHEN SCOPE FOR DESIGN CONTRACT IS DRAFTED. ALSO REQUEST REDSO PLAN TO SEND FULL NEGOTIATING TEAM TO LCBC MEETING SEPT. 20-29.

5. TONWE INQUIRED ABOUT STATUS RFP FOR LCBC TELECOM AND WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISTRESSED WHEN RDO WAS UNABLE PROVIDE DEFINITIVE ANSWER ON ITS ISSUANCE. HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT HE BE ABLE TO REPORT SOMETHING CONCRETE ON THIS PROJECT IN SEPTEMBER AND URGED ARRANGEMENTS BE MADE TO HAVE PROPOSALS IN HIS HANDS BY THEN. RDO HAS REQUESTED AID/W ACTION ON THIS IN ANOTHER CABLE.

6. FINALLY TONWE EXPRESSED BITTERNESS ON LCBC RELATIONS WITH UNDP-FAO PARTICULARLY IN ASSALE-SERBEWEL PROJECT (CENTRAL AFRICAN

LIVESTOCK). HE SAID UNDP-FAO CAUSED HIM INCESSANT ADMINISTRATIVE/
POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITH BUREAUCRATIC DELAY, FAILING TO MAKE LONG-
TERM COMMITMENT TO PROJECT, GOING DIRECTLY TO GOVERNMENTS WITHOUT
HIS KNOWLEDGE AND TRYING TO TAKE ALL THE GLORY. UNDP WANTS THEIR
CONTRIBUTION TO BE SELF-CONTAINED UNIT BY-PASSING LCBC
SECRETARIAT. TONWE SAID HE HAD ALMOST REACHED POINT OF PARTING WAYS
WITH UNDP AND COMPLAINED SOME UNDP EXPERTS HAD ADVOCATED ABOLISHMENT
OF LCBC AS ORGANIZATION WITHOUT RAISON D'ETRE. ALTHOUGH UNDP
POLICY IS OSTENSIBLY TO SUPPORT REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS UNDP
WAS INSISTING ON OBTAINING SIGNATURES OF ALL LCBC MEMBER COUNTRIES
ON THEIR GRANT AGREEMENT THUS UNDERCUTTING LCBC STATUS. ALSO
UNDP DOES NOT FULLY RECOGNIZE LCBC BECAUSE BHEY DO NOT HAVE
PROTOCOL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THEM, BUT TONWE CANNOT GET
UNDP TO TAKE A POSITIVE STEP TOWARDS REACHING SUCH AN
AGREEMENT. TONWE MET TWICE WITH MICHEL DOO KINGUE, UNDP AFRICA
BUREAU DIRECTOR IN YAOUNDE THIS WEEK, BUT IS NOT SURE LCBC
WILL GET SATISFACTION. GIVEN LOW EBB LCBC-UNDP RELATIONS
AND FACT THIS MIGHT JEOPARDIZE ASSALE-SERBEWEL PROJECT WOULD
APPRECIATE USUN VIEWS ON HOW RELATIONS MIGHT BE IMPROVED.
DECON DEC 30, 1974
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